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ABSTRACT

The organization of amateur sports around the school and university system is a uniquely American administrative structure. This paper traces the developmental patterns leading to the emergence of sports-governing bodies such as the Amateur Athletic Union, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and the National Association for Girls and Women in Sport. Attention is paid to the relationship between social values and competitive endeavour. The transformation of college-level athletics into "big business" is discussed, and the roles of minority group and female athletes are explored. Material is included regarding the interaction between amateur sports, the role of school and/or university as a governing agency, and the emergence of physical education as a legitimate field of study. (LH)

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Controlling Athletics in Education: History and Perspective

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Athletics has been considered an integral part of the American educational system for many decades. Though we think of a large, highly organized system of interschool athletic competition as a typical educational pattern, it is a pattern common only to the United States. It is a system which puzzles or mystifies the educators and coaches in many nations, yet we take it for granted. Because this system of sport existing within the nation's educational system was often cited as the reason behind America's superiority in international sport in the past, it is of value to look into its history. Why is the school the center of American sporting competition, when it is not so in the other nations of the world? How did our schools develop differently?

When we speak of organizations to control sport beyond the range of the individual institution, we usually are speaking of developments which occurred during the twentieth century. Athletic activities were in the schools well before 1800, though accounts of such activities were limited. The coming of organized sport in the United States, as well as most of the Western world, was after 1850. The first organized inter-collegiate sporting competition in the United States was a rowing match

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in 1852, with several other sports beginning competition at the college level by 1880. During those years the college faculties and boards of trustees vacillated in their views of such activities, wavering from a position of disapproval because of the rowdier elements of sport to a position, if not of approval, at least not in objection, so long as matters did not become too extreme. The pattern of growth is complex, for it is complicated by parallel systems of regulatory bodies which claim control of non-school athletes and have on occasion quarrelled with the school groups over the question of ultimate control over the athletes.

Risking oversimplification of a very broad development, I would like to address briefly the question of the development of different patterns of athletic control in the United States compared to other nations. The United States developed a pattern of athletic competition in the schools which is still without equal in the world. Most nations have, below a single national sports authority, a system of sports clubs, more frequently attached to communities or places of work than to schools. Indeed, in some nations of eastern Europe the more prominent sports clubs provide their own schools, a complete reversal of the American pattern (though some critics of modern athletics night suggest that it is merely the American model carried to its next logical step).

The simple fact is that while athletic clubs appeared in the United States during the early days of modern sport's organization, just as was the case in Europe, the ultimate center of mass organized sport became

the schools and colleges, rather than the clubs. The reason was perhaps simply the difference in societies. Education in Europe in the nineteenth century, the period of the nurturing of modern sporting organizations, was still essentially an elitist institution. It was not merely the preserve of an intellectual elite; in England it was a way of life dedicated to a particular class system. The higher levels of education, both secondary and university, were essentially the domain of the upper classes. In the United States many schools were available for those who wished an education. To be sure it was not so universally available as today, but it was nonetheless far more open to the public than in England, the heart of early modern organized sport.

The early stages of the organization of sport were echoed almost step by step from the English university to its American counterpart. However, somewhere along the way a major shift in direction took place. In part, this might have been a function of the difference in scale. In England, to go to a university or college in the 1800s meant primarily Oxford or Cambridge, while in the United States numerous such institutions were available. In consequence, while the actions of the athletically-inclined Oxonian might have had a major effect on university sport in England, in the United States the practices of an athlete at Harvard rivalled the fabled impact of a snowflake on the Chattahoochee River. Multitudes of other models shared the limelight. While the Ivy League schools had a strong early influence, it lasted for only a few decades.

The people who organized English sport outside the school were essentially the same Oxford and Cambridge elite who performed the same function inside the university, carrying on their singleness of purpose and preventing the overlap of conflicting ideals which caused considerable struggles in the developmental period of American regulatory groups. There was, in essence, a single philosophy of sport in England as its sporting institutions developed, while in the United States the school sports groups were in competition with the non-school groups, often fighting over the same group of athletes.

At the same time, the much broader population in the American schools tended to break down the elitist view of sport, for the competition was designed for the swift and strong, rather than the rich and smart as in England. This was probably the primary reason for the swift rise of American sporting teams to the top of early world competition, for American sporting organizations have never been so unified that they themselves produced strong programs and great athletes. This weakness is still a glaring characteristic of American national sport today.

However, the American version of education for the masses brought the greatest proportion of the population of any nation onto the field of competition, meeting the old coaching maxim that "The more milk you have, the more cream will rise to the top." By involving far more people in sport, the Americans soon surpassed the earlier leading English, who were struggling to keep sport the domain of the privileged.

We might also consider that the far older European university system has stressed the independence of the university far more than the American system. While the European faculty would try to regulate the students only where it was considered absolutely necessary, for the most part it was a very independent, "hands off" system for both students and faculty. Consequently, the European universities never really attempted to develop systems to regulate school sports, for athletics was not really considered a legitimate concern of a body concerned with intellectual development. The European student was for the most part left to indulge his sporting interests as he saw fit.

In the American system, the student has traditionally been considered as a helpless child, a situation which not merely would benefit from faculty guidance, but one which demanded it in every aspect of student life. Only in the United States did the clarion call of in loco parentis develop the holy stature so stoutly defended in the courts of law. Where the European faculty ignored many matters as none of its business, the American teacher and administrator plunged in neck deep, too frequently discovering the quicksand beneath the surface a bit too late.

The European institutions also were not concerned with attracting students, for there were few institutions, and the students would come anyway. In the United States, with its growing multitude of schools, the schools were very concerned with attracting students, so the faculties and administrators devoted themselves to areas which they believed would

entice more students to attend their schools. This included offering programs of intercollegiate sport. It meant providing better facilities for exercise and sporting competition. Eventually it came to mean having winning teams which were well-publicized. By 1900 there were far more differences than similarities between the English and American systems of both education and school sports.

To get a clearer look at how the regulation of school sports developed, we will look briefly at the early development of regulatory bodies in men's college sports, followed by the developments in women's college sports, then the development of high school bodies. I will conclude by suggesting some research needs in this area of sport history.

Developments in Men's Intercollegiate Athletics

Two developments were apparent in the trend toward organized sport in the United States between 1850 and 1890: While athletic teams were being formed in the schools, beginning in the northeastern colleges, athletic clubs were also forming and beginning to work to organize sport more along modern lines. Both school sports and the athletic clubs played important roles in this early period.

The first competition between two colleges was a rowing match between Harvard and Yale in 1852. From the first intercollegiate match in 1852 it was a short step to the first international collegiate match, held in 1869 between Harvard and Oxford on the Thames River. Although no more than two dozen schools had teams by 1875, athletics was increasing

rapidly in popularity. By 1890 there were at least eight intercollegiate sports which had been contested, most of which had formed regional or national associations to codify their rules and standardize competition. Several attempts were made in the New York City area to develop a national non-school sporting body, culminating in the organization of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) in 1888, generally considered the first really national body in amateur sports in the United States. The Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, organized in New York City in 1883, has been described as the first attempt at faculty control of college sports.[2] The real growth of athletic conferences was not to come until after 1890, however.[3]

The rapid growth in popularity of intercollegiate athletics led to a sharp rise in abuse of the amateur sport ethic. Some indication of the growing problems was given by Wilbur Bowen in a 1908 article reprinted in the American Physical Education Review in 1909.[4] He first pointed out the rapid growth of athletics in America's colleges and high schools in the two decades since about 1890, noting that the value of athletics was accepted by most people for health reasons, but he quickly pointed out that athletics was not operated for the good of the mass of students.

Bowen argued that the financial success of school athletics has been its greatest attraction to the public, particularly businessmen, who have been attracted to the schools as fans primarily by the business success aspects of the venture. To Bowen this developed an image of athletics

as a commercial venture, rather than a facet of the educational program. He argued that the evils which appeared were the result of the schools' failure to provide financial support for the athletic program as a worthy part of the educational process. As a result, athletics was forced to become a commercial enterprise to sustain itself from year to year.

Bowen's final comments were to the point both then and today. While explaining the natural process of the development of commercialism in college athletics, he stated that

> ...the influence is bad when the desire to win is exaggerated out of all reason by making financial support and the existence of the sports dependent on winning...The school and college authorities who wish athletic reform can get it at any time when they are ready to provide the funds; then they can dictate the method of expenditure and the system will be free from the commercial spirit and the moral and educational evils that go along with it.[5]

Early college conferences were beginning to appear to establish more educationally-compatible practices in athletics among groups of institutions, with the earliest surviving examples being the Southern Conference, formed in 1894, and the Western Conference, today's Big Ten, founded in 1895. Most early efforts at control were in the form of faculty or faculty-student groups within the individual schools. The early student groups which were the first level of organization were primarily devoted to the survival of the program in the face of administrative or faculty disinterest. The real move toward a regulatory body on a broad scale came with the formation of the NCAA in 1906.

We sometimes overlook the frequency with which schools used athletics

to develop a reputation for the institution, even while refusing to fully support the programs which they sometimes admitted did the most to give the school a reputation. The president of Cornell cancelled an $1100 debt owed to the school by its rowing team after the team's victory in an 1875 regatta.[6] He wrote the debt off to advertising.

The rising tide of football fatalities, coupled with increasing discontent with the work of the football rules committee controlled by Walter Camp led to meetings in 1905 and early 1906 which laid the basis for the modern National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). From the original 36 schools joining in 1906, by 1910 when the current name was adopted, some 76 colleges were members. The group attested its interest in establishing high ethical standards for college sports, developing physical education in the schools, and promoting intramural athletics. Without the considerable behind-the-scenes influence of President Theodore Roosevelt, an hearty advocate of vigorous activities, the formation of the group would likely have been delayed for years.[7]

In the early years the NCAA set to work to standardize the rules of intercollegiate competition. More consistent rules were sought, standards of eligibility were being developed, and rule books were beginning to be produced. Eventually, national championships began to be contested. The real burst of growth came in the 1920s, as the nation recovered from the effects of the Great War and threw itself into a life of escapism and fantasy.

After the 1920s the small colleges, which were hurt more by the Depression than the larger schools, were forced to drop sports in many cases. The small colleges were becoming increasingly critical of the NCAA, for they thought the NCAA had been founded by and thus favored the larger schools. They believed that the "big money" schools controlled the NCAA, so during the late 1930s and early 1940s moves were made to found national organizations similar to the NCAA for the smaller senior colleges and for the junior colleges. From a 1937 small college basketball tournament in Kansas City flowed the impetus for the formation of the National Association for Intercollegiate Basketball (1940), which expanded its scope in 1952 to become the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). About the same time as the earlier tournament (1937) the framework was laid for the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

Even today the genuine interest of the NCAA in its educational goals is open to considerable public questioning. It has become a rich institution, fat and devoted to the twin gods of Division I football and basketball, apparent servant of the weekly Top Twenty teams. Its only recent foray into sports for the students was its sudden interest in sacrificially accepting the burden of control of women's college athletics when it was faced with the twin threats of Title IX and the early growth of the AIAW.

The Growth of Women's Athletic Groups

In a way, this area of development is simpler than the men's. Not, of course, because the women were less interested in competing than were their male counterparts, but because the women leaders were less inclined to permit such competition than were their male colleagues. Though they did not appear as early as men's athletics, women's sporting interests in the colleges were becoming clear during the second half of the nineteenth century. We generally see the more sedentary activities, such as croquet, bicycling, tennis, and golf, but more strenuous sports were appearing. Vassar had a field day in 1895, and a list of women's track records appeared in a 1905 publication, implying that competition in track was not that uncommon in the Eastern states.[8] The magazine Review of Reviews had a written symposium on women's sports in 1900.[9]

Women's sports had been developing since the 1890s to the point that by the 1920s interscholastic and intercollegiate teams were springing up in many areas, just as the men's teams had appeared a few decades before. Where the most influential sport for men had been football, the women adopted and developed basketball. Indeed, they adopted the game with such enthusiasm that in some parts of the nation it was considered exclusively a women's sport. Because organizations rarely developed any rules or standards for women in the different sports, the women had to make their own rules. One reason for the strong start made by basketball for women was the early work by Senda Berenson, who led in the development of a women's basketball rules committee in 1899.[10]

The Women's Olympics of 1922 and the attempt made by the AAU to take over women's track and field around that time resulted in action from several women's groups interested in sports and precipitated the formation of the Women's Division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation in 1924. The evolution of the groups most concerned with women's competition, especially in the schools, is complex.

During this period the continuing group within the APEA/AAHPER was the Committee on Women's athletics, which evolved as the Section on Women's Athletics (1927), the National Section on Women's Athletics (1932), into which the Women's Division of the NAAF merged in 1940, and the National Section for Girls' and Women's Sports (1953), later to become the DGWS, then today's NAGWS. A parallel organization was the Athletic Conference of American College Women (1917), which became the Athletic Federation of College Women in 1933. Also parallel, in the sense that many women physical educators were members of both, was the group that became the NAPECW in 1945.

During the 1920s and 1930s little provision was made for the more highly skilled females in the schools and colleges, for the emphasis was upon the participation of the masses of less-skilled women in lower-level competition. Though the women educators who opposed interschool athletics so strongly were speaking long and loud, there is some question as to whether they had the support of the large masses of women physical educators and of the women students themselves, for the student groups not under the

close control of the women physical educators voted heavily in favor of competitive athletics.[11] Nonetheless, there was no active promotion of women's athletics by the women physical educators until 1963, when the DGWS made a move. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the larger number of women physical educators held strongly to this position of opposition to interschool athletics for women; their influence was immense, for unlike the men, the same women controlled the activity programs, sports programs, and professional preparation programs for women, so they were able to produce a professional body which held to a fairly consistent philosophy.

During these decades the teams of business and industrial concerns, the factories, the banks, the insurance companies, all contributed to the development of women's sports in the United States, while the physical educators tried to pretend that the interest did not exist. The national champion athletes during those years were most often participating on a company team, as were the women who represented the United States in international competition. Indeed, when Mildred "Babe" Didrikson appeared in the national sporting arena, it was as a company representative; the schools had not wanted to provide the opportunity to compete. The dawning of mass competition for American women was not to appear before the 1960s.

A change came in 1941 when Gladys Palmer of Ohio State University proposed the formation of a Women's College Athletic Association to provide intercollegiate athletics for women, with the first event a Women's National Collegiate Golf Tournament at Ohio State. The National Association

of Directors of Physical Education for College Women recoiled in horror and moved to prevent either from happening. Though no group was formed, the tournament was the first national intercollegiate tournament for women. Though the war prevented its repetition, it was revived in 1946 and continued to be contested annually through 1956, providing the impetus for the organization of a group to conduct women's intercollegiate athletics.[12] Despite the opposition of the women's professional groups, by 1951 varsity teams were in 28% of the nation's colleges, suggesting that the physical educators were far out of touch with the interests and desires of their students. The period of real growth in women's athletics in the United States was not to come until the 1960s and 1970s.

Control of women's sports in the colleges eventually passed to the AIAW (Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women), which was begun in 1972.[13] It promoted sport on the national and international level. The National Federation of State High School Associations also became more active in girls' sports and began to develop rule books and statewide competitions at the high school level. The last decade has seen massive changes in women's athletics in the United States, both in practices and in public attitudes toward the programs, particularly with the impetus provided by Title IX's insistence on equal opportunities for men and women students in school programs.

The Growth of High School Sporting Bodies

As we mentioned earlier, the growth of high school sports was stimu-

lated by the example of intercollegiate athletics. Interest in competition generally began with the students, who organized teams and promoted contests. Though most schools were not interested in recognizing or encouraging the competitive sports within the schools, as had been the case in the colleges also, there were leaders who were sufficiently interested or concerned that they made efforts to form regulatory organizations outside the regular educational organizations. The idea that athletics was separate from education was still the dominant concept in sports competition at all levels.[14]

We should not assume that interscholastic athletics was the child of the twentieth century. By 1888 there was an Interscholastic Football Association in Boston. A public school athletic league was organized in Cincinnati in 1896, the New York City league was organized in 1903, and similar leagues were rapidly forming in most large cities around that time. At a higher level, state high school athletic associations were founded in both Wisconsin and Michigan in 1895, with Illinois following in 1898, Indiana in 1903, and Ohio in 1907. Perhaps the example of the Western Conference formed in that area in 1895 for college sports was an influential factor. At the regional level, the Interscholastic Athletic Association of the Middle Atlantic States, a black high school league, was formed in 1910.

Thus, the high schools essentially echoed the developmental pattern of the men's college athletics, beginning with student organizations devoted to individual sports, then forming conferences, though they were

more geographically compact than the college conferences, then moving to a regional association of schools. Forsyth suggested that little evidence could be found to support the idea that these associations showed much strength or influence in combatting the problems of the time, however.[5] The standards which were set and enforced first were usually those of the state associations, which also took the lead in forming a national association.

The essential problem of high school athletics was the same one faced by men's college athletics: the nonsupport of the athletic program by the school, forcing the students to become more commercial in their interests if they were to perpetuate the program. The secretary of the Illinois state association called a meeting in Chicago in the spring of 1920 to discuss a larger organization. Attended by representatives from five states, in 1921 it resulted in four of the states becoming charter members of the Midwest Federation of State High School Athletic Associations. The regional group changed the "Midwest" to "National" in 1923, and by 1926 the association included 24 of the 48 states as members. It worked to develop a standard set of national rules for each sport, standardize the rules of eligibility, and improve cooperative contacts with other amateur athletic groups. In 1925 it was endorsed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals as the agency which should represent high school athletics in any situation concerning interstate or national concerns.

The social democracy concerns of the schools grew in the 1930s, for a problem then was absorbing the second and third generation children of the earlier immigrants into American society, and sport was seen as a natural and strong influence in the Americanizing process. The public schools were viewed as the first and leading agent in the Americanization process, followed closely by the playgrounds and athletic fields. As one newspaper editor wrote, "A people that plays so well together will not spend much time in hate."[16] More ethnic groups were appearing in sports competitions as the children of the immigrants were absorbed into the mainstream of American life. School spirit and team play were considered one of the best ways to break through nationalistic animosity.

Athletics had become a stable part of the school program by the 1930s, for it was believed that it played a role in the life of the nation's youths that could be filled in no other way. Interscholastic sports were reaching all the way down to the junior high school level and were beginning to reach for the elementary schools by the late 1930s, but they faced considerable criticism over the development.

Though the National Federation was originally concerned with promoting high school sports and protecting school teams from some of the early excesses of competition, it has dropped "Athletic" from its name because many of the 49 states in the federation include activities such as band and speech contests that do not fit into the definition of the old title. The National Federation suggests eligibility standards, issues national

sports rule books and officials' guides, and suggests standards for intersectional high school competitions. It has begun issuing rule books for women's high school sports as the women's programs have begun to expand rapidly in the 1970s.

A Research Potential

As we have looked over the development of regulatory bodies for school athletics for men and women, we might notice that there are gaps in our information. We have room for considerable research in this critical area. The problems of ethical concerns and dilemmas are ever-present, yet little work seems to have been done to approach these persistent questions, some of philosophy and others of practice. What is the place of competitive athletics in education? We still find little agreement in that broad, and critical, area.

The interrelationship of the development of competitive school athletics for men and women in the high schools and colleges of the United States needs to be studied. I do not mean separately, as this paper does, but in the sense of how each affected the others. Did the development of one influence the development of another? Did they all spring up independently and concurrently? A study of the influence of prominent leaders on this development would be worthy of study. How did Senda Berenson's philosophy and work influence the development of women's sports? How did Amy Morris Homans' "old girl" cabal influence or hamper the development of women's athletics in the United States? Can we find

any reasons other than those in published articles which might suggest more elemental reasons for their adamant opposition to women competing in athletics?

The developmental patterns of the NCAA are worth far more study than they have been given, particularly given the societal and media attention awarded actions by that group. Did the NCAA do anything about the Carnegie Report of 1929? Did it take any action? When did it finally begin investigating and punishing violators, and why? Was the NCAA ever concerned about promoting women's athletics before the time of the AIAW? Why, or why not? What ever happened to the original goals of the NCAA, for that matter? How closely are the current AIAW problems simulating those of the young NCAA well over half a century ago? We say we can learn from the mistakes of the past, but have we really made any efforts to learn?

The whole question of minorities in school athletics needs study, just as it is needed in the relationships of minorities to our professional groups. Did the NCAA ever make any effort toward integration in college athletics? The colleges were certainly aware of the problem before the formation of the NCAA. But did the NCAA ever take a position of leadership? If not, why not? The same question can be raised with the AAHPER, which did not see fit to admit blacks to membership until the Supreme Court was ordering the integration of schools. Why was this so, and was the situation the same in the CPEA and the NAPECW, which were considerably

more "clubby," we might say, than the much larger AAHPER.

The area of school athletics has been an important one for over a century now. It is time we studied it more fully in relation to our society, both then and now, for the lessons we may learn can stand us in good stead in the future.

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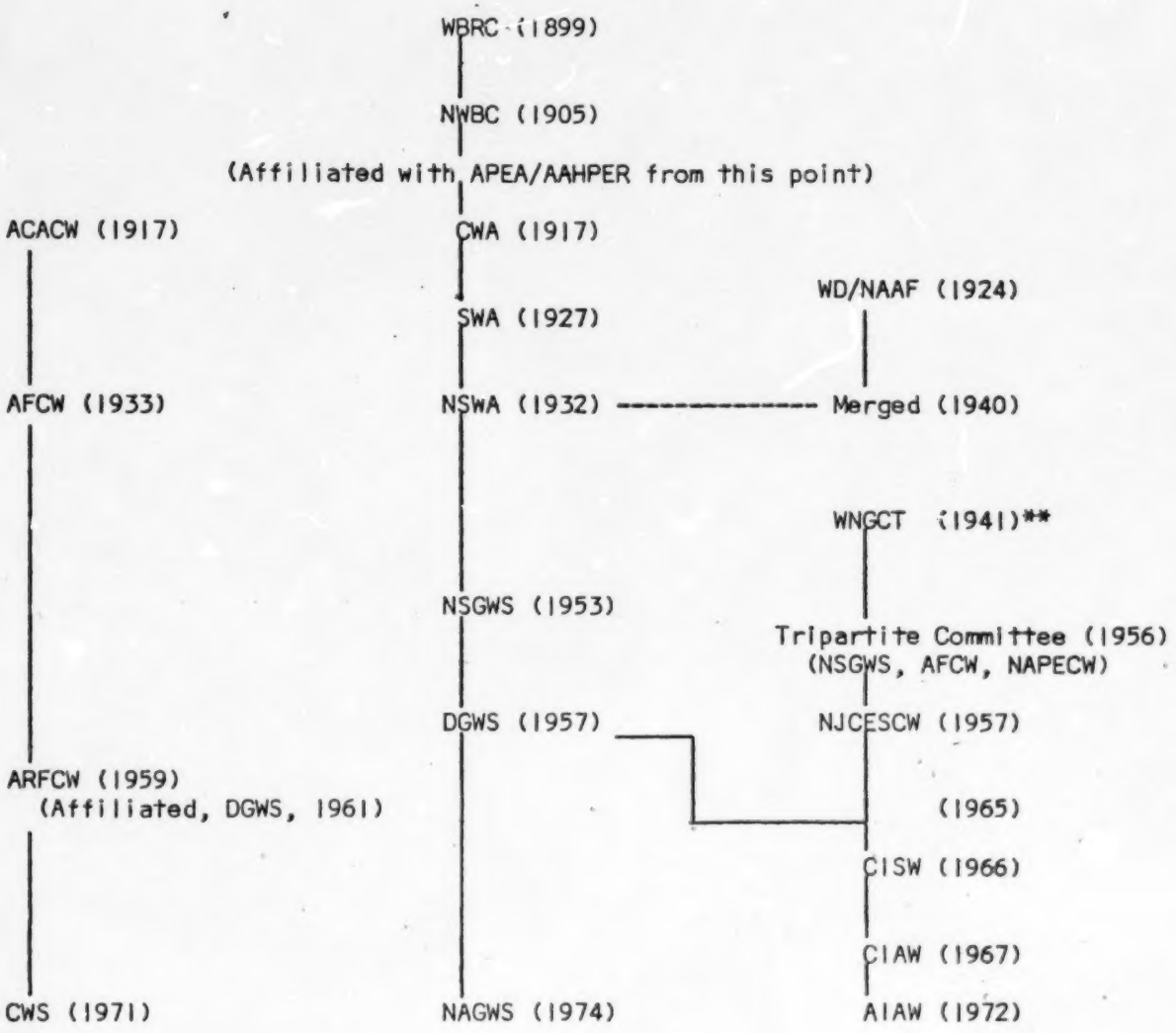
Appendix: The Development of College Women's Sports Groups



**Not an organization

Appendix: Women's Sport Groups, Part 2

Index of Names

AAHPER (1974)	American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
ACACW (1917)	Athletic Conference of American College Women
AFCW (1933)	Athletic Federation of College Women
AIAW (1972)	Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women
APEA (1903)	American Physical Education Association
ARFCW (1959)	Athletic and Recreation Federation of College Women
CIAW (1967)	Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics for Women
CISW (1966)	Commission on Intercollegiate Sports for Women
CWA (1917)	Committee on Women'a Athletics
CWS (1971)	College Women in Sport
DGWS (1957)	Division for Girls' and Women's Sports
NAGWS (1974)	National Association for Girls' and Women's Sports
NJCESCW (1957)	National Joint Committee on Extramural Sports for College Women
NSGWS (1953)	National Section for Girls' and Women's Sports
NSWA (1932)	National Section on Women's Athletics
NWBC (1905)	National Women's Basketball Committee
SWA (1927)	Section on Women's Athletics
WBRC (1899)	Women's Basketball Rules Committee
WD/NAAF (1924)	Women's Division, National Amateur Athletic Federation
WNGCT (1941)	Women's National Collegiate Golf Tournament (This was an event, not an organization)